

30 January 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR RAY CLINE

25X1A9a

SUBJECT: OBI Comments on 29 January [REDACTED] Interim Report on NIS

Although I am told the USIB covering memo has been cut and presumably the Report dissemination will be expedited, it seems to me that in its present form it might be embarrassing to the Agency and I wonder if there is a possibility of top-level effort to get some reconsideration of the Report before it gets widely distributed.

In re: Recommendations

Nobody would quarrel much with the re-stated "broad principles in 5. a. except that "revision" and "redesigned" have pointless negative connotation and I would argue for the recommendations in the attached 26 January draft I passed [REDACTED] after he asked for "confidential and frank" comments on 25X1A9a their draft recommendations which are essentially the final version.

5. b. is not acceptable on many grounds, and can be readily shot down on many. In effect this arrogates to the Coordination Staff the running of the NIS Program, by-passing the codified responsibilities and authorities of the DCI, the DD/I, OBI, and the USIB interagency NIS Committee. Aside from implying magic in a new fifth wheel, this would give the Staff a raison d'etre heretofore absent and would pry the door open to a lot of other gratuitous intrusions into the complicated business of the DD/I and the Community. It should be emphasized to USIB (partly because of the criticisms of present management in the Findings and Attachment) that OBI, the NIS Committee, and the agencies already have the actions recommended in b. (2) in train, as well as others (such as eliminating most detailed Armed Forces sections) not thought about by the Staff. You and I agreed on these before the Staff began interviewing people. These are only the latest of previous such actions.

Recommendation b. (3) doesn't mean anything. The NIS Committee already is the going-concern "central point" referred to in b. (4) and is now going about the complex inter-agency business of negotiating the changes and selectivity the DD/I has outlined. The Committee also does the job outlined in b. (5), taking into account other factors than those mentioned, notably contributor capabilities; OBI and the Committee long ago recognized priorities for the Mideast, Africa, and Latin America, but the required research capability just did not exist. The Staff has been given ample evidence of the practical difficulties in achieving b. (6).

13

12/4/80

the well-known complexities in keeping a large inter-agency show on the road. In 3. a. on p. 4 the paper ignores the point made by OBI that much of the present content stems from more sophisticated user needs, and more collection and other capabilities for meeting those requirements.

3. b. makes a rambling plug for more departmental production, which in some ways is acceptable but in effect invites the very uncoordinated proliferation the Staff has previously expressed concern about.

4. a. states the problem of non-currency without indicating any managerial awareness of, or actions taken and being taken, to improve the situation. As to 4. b., the Staff was informed that much NIS was classified lower prior to the Executive Order but now has the classification which is required for national intelligence if it is not to be emasculated. As to 4. d., the Staff has been informed that the age of extant NIS, the availability of significant new data or injection of new user requirements, and above all the availability of specialized contributor agency manpower, are among the un-noted factors entering into annual joint negotiations of production priorities. No point in jabbing at 6 on p. 6 except to note that evolving the appropriate and effective modifications mentioned in c can best be accomplished by the existing Committee mechanism, given my proposed USIB direction that the agencies provide the level and responsiveness of support required to do the job.

It is unfortunate that a somewhat more favorable impression of the Program comes along in the Attachment, which the DCI and others are not likely to read.

Many more details could be mentioned, but I hope this will provide highlights useful to you.

25X1A9a
[REDACTED]

Dis;tribution:

- O - Addressee
- 1 - Coord. Staff
- 1 - DD/I chrono

Recommendation b. (7) is clearly fussy, and I think purposely so with a view to increased USIB detailed involvement in the Program--via the Staff of course--as a Utopian solution for a whole gamut of inter-agency problems that are worked out by negotiation/suasion rather than broad-principle edicts.

I assume you will want to kill the proposed over-riding Staff role in view of the jurisdictional aspects and the fraught precedent that could be established. The Recommendations in effect say the NIS is sound and doing a needed job, but this tyro staff can do it better. In fact they are behind the parade, and their recommendations for the NIS are really premature at this stage of their game. I think that USIB approval of something equivalent to my attached draft recommendations would be much more constructive and feasible, in which event the Staff could either be thanked and told that about all that is practicable seems to have been accomplished, or--since USIB did issue a sweeping directive--be invited to continue a never-never study of the entire basic intelligence field.

In re: Findings

Too bad ~~there~~ to have Community dissemination of these, which (as in c) are behind the parade and imply that management has done nothing, have over-simplifications and non-sequiturs in d. and elsewhere, and in f. make an unrealistic crack about academic stylization and note priority problems about which the Staff is unwitting. As noted above, g. is wholly fuzzy. The possible intent may be to say that, if the NIS Committee is to be a USIB component despite the earlier sore-point recommendation by the Staff, then the Committee ought to clutch the USIB apron strings more and/or that more detailed USIB intervention can provide a panacea for the complex inter-agency problems involved. h. endorses The Flag and Motherhood.

In re: Attachment A

This has some pats on the back and I must say reflects Balmer's personally buying several of my points on the Staff's early-draft errors in fact and implications. However, there are serious short-falls. The statement in 2. a at top p. 3 that the Program "advanced rapidly" was pointed out as misleading, inasmuch as if the contributors had produced at the rate they initially proposed and thought they could achieve the initial coverage would have been completed much sooner and the Maintenance problem would have been greatly reduced. The Program can scarcely be termed "highly formalized" as in 2. b. where such choice of words contributes to the paper's general implication of a Dinosaur operation without recognizing